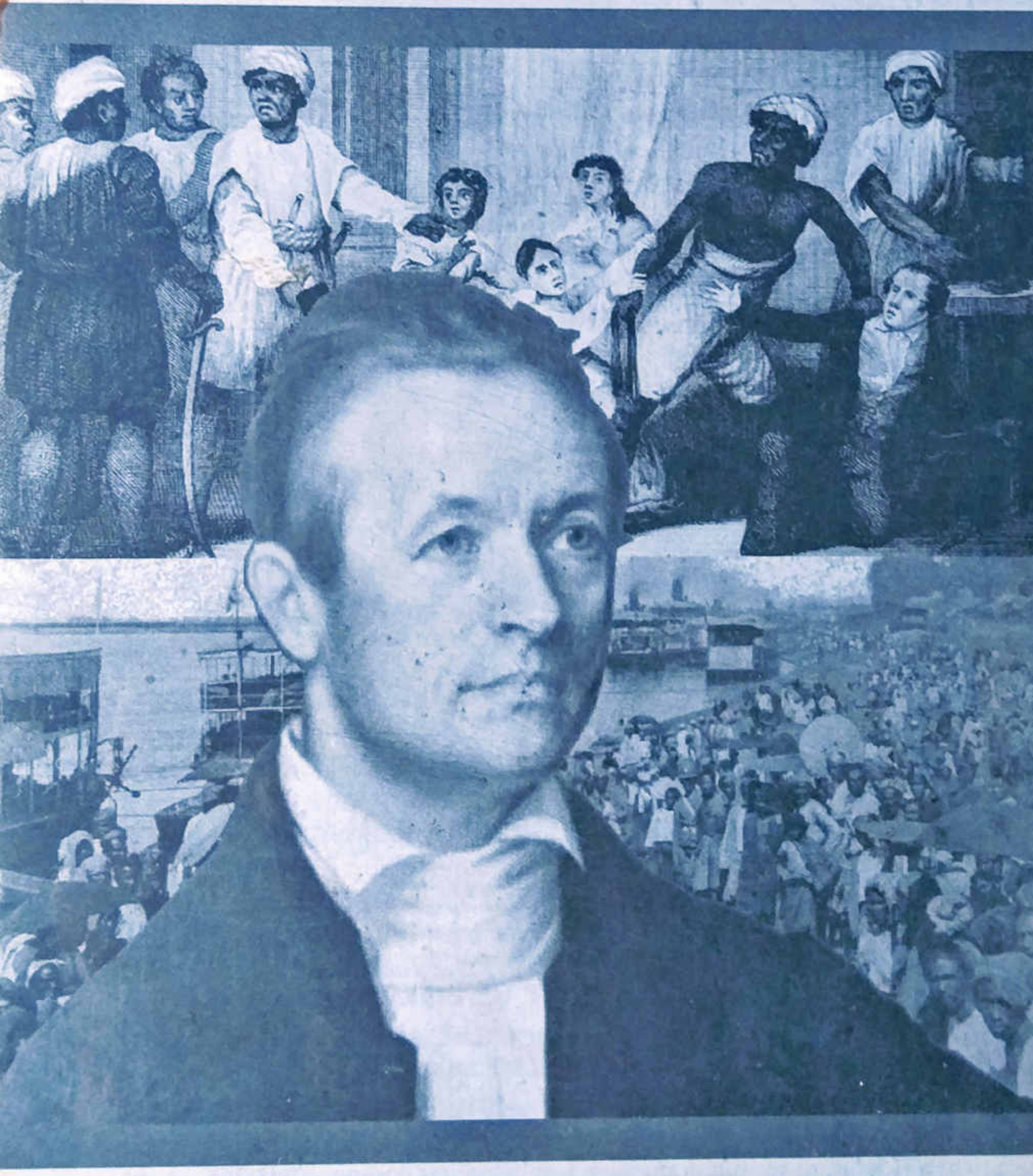
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# Adoniram Judson

## Founder of the Church of Burma

### Translated and printed the Bible in Burmese



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# Haystack Prayer Meeting

**Behold, he prayeth. Act 9:11**

On a Saturday afternoon five young men from Williams College met together to pray near a grove of maple trees. Thunderstorm, lightning and rain forced the students to run and take shelter in a haystack. The students knelt down and prayed that God would send them across the seas to share the good news of Jesus Christ with a lost world. God heard their prayer. In 1810, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was launched in response to a petition for assistance coming from these prayer partners. On February 12, 1812, the first missionaries from America set sail for India, Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice, who would become founders of the modern missionary movement among Baptists. The ABCFM was the first Christian ministry in the United States devoted to sending missionaries overseas and In the 19th century it was the largest and most important of American missionary organizations.



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# Adoniram Judson

August 9, 1788 – April 12, 1850



**Let me beg you, not to rest contented with the commonplace religion that is now so prevalent.**

-Based on "A memoir of the life and labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson, D.D"
BY FRANCIS WAYLAND, and other sources.

By John David William, MA, B.Ed

Adoniram Judson was born to a Pastor, also named Adoniram and Abigail Brown in Maiden, Massachusetts, USA, on Aug. 9, 1788. His father was a stern man, very strict at house, possessed great integrity and was a consistent Christian. His father and mother had a great influence in life. A very precocious child, he learnt to read when he was only three. At four, his favourite game was to gather together the children of the neighbourhood to play church, he officiating as minister; and his favourite hymn was the one beginning,



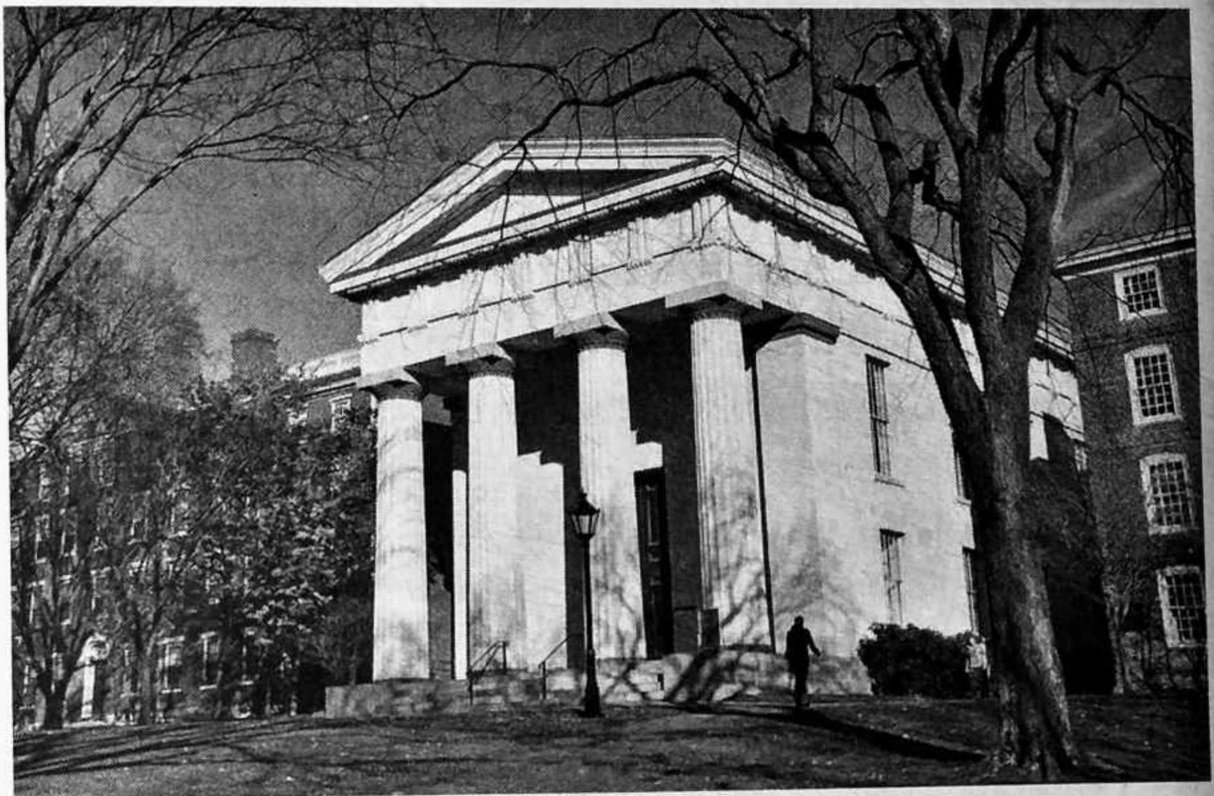
House where Adoniram was born

"Go preach my gospel, saith the Lord." He loved puzzles and memorized many for puzzling his school friends. In grammar school he showed unusual taste for languages and was nicknamed Virgil, or "Old Virgil dug up." At twelve, he sought after books to read that the older people refused to give him because he was not even a youth. At 19, he opened a school in which he taught for nearly a year. During this time he also published two text-books, "The Elements of English Grammar," and "The Young Lady's Arithmetic."

**Judson at College**

In 1804, he entered Rhode Island College, now Brown University. He was a hardworking student and excelled in studies. Judson's intelligence and success made him an ambitious person. His father had also once remarked that he would be a great man! Ambition got into his head. Now he wanted to become a poet, now an orator, now a statesman.

During his college days he was much affected by two contrasting streams of



Manning Hall, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island
Judson graduated with honours but became a atheist in the process

thoughts. Suppose he should attain the very highest pinnacle that human nature is capable; then what? Could he hold his honours forever? His favourites of other ages had long since become dust. What is use to them that the world still praised them? What use, if he would become so great that America would never be able to produce his equal, a hundred years later? Alexander wept when at the summit of his ambition. Judson was frightened at the vanity of greatness. He dismissed these thoughts but a few days later his mind was into another train of thoughts. His mind was comparing between a men labouring for worldly goals while another, a minister of God labouring for eternal rewards. The humble minister of the gospel labours only to please God and benefit his fellow-men. There is something divine about it! This reputation is enduring! Yes, yes, his fame is sounded before him as he enters the other world; and this was the only fame worthy of possession, because it was the only one that triumphed over the grave. Suddenly, the words flashed across his mind, "Not unto us, not unto us, but to Thy name be the glory." He was puzzled by these thoughts that lay dormant in him. He wanted to become religious but religion seems to oppose his ambitious plans. He fully realized the vanity of worldly pursuits but he did not want to give up his worldly goals.

**Judson, an atheist**

In Judson's days, Deism, the philosophy of Thomas Paine was sweeping America. He had written the powerful, widely read pamphlet 'Common Sense'. His book 'The Age of Reason' advocates 'deism' which promotes so called reason and freethinking, and argues against institutionalized religion in general and Christian doctrine in particular. "All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit," he wrote. So much was his influence in those days that students preferred to call each other by the names of Tom Paine or Voltaire, instead of their own names.

One of Judson's senior, Jacob Earmes, an exceptionally gifted, witty and clever, and an outspoken deist was attracted to Judson, and Judson was flattered

and fascinated by his friendship. An intimate friendship developed between these two intelligent young men, with the result that Judson also became as great an unbeliever as his friend. He graduated in BA in September 1807. He kept his new found beliefs hidden from his parents.

**Visit to New York**

On his 20th birthday he broke the news to his parents that he has rejected the Gospel and has accepted deism. This broke the hearts of his parents. His father rebuked and protested, his mother wept. He then told them that he was heading for New York to write plays and he wanted his father to give him a horse as part of his inheritance. His father through tears gave it away. He took the company of a pack of likeminded, strolling young people and started his journey.

Later he wrote, "He went to Albany, took passage in the newly invented Robert Futon's steamer to New York, attached himself to a theatrical company. He silenced his conscience by saying that he is just seeing the dark as well as the bright side of life and that he isn't so vile to do anything wrong. But the sights and scenes did little to satisfy him. He returned to his uncle in Sheffield. But instead of his uncle he met a pious young man who stunned him by how strongly he held to his Christian convictions. He was left wondering may be there is another way to be a Christian instead of being a deist. The next night he did not have enough time to go far enough and so asked lodgings from an innkeeper. He informed him that he had only one room but it was adjacent to one where a critically ill young man lay and he might bother him throughout the night.

"I'll take the room," said Judson. "Death has no terrors for me. You see, I'm a deist."

**Face to face with death**

Judson tried to sleep but it eluded him. The partition was very thin and for long hours he listened to the groans of the dying man - groans of agony and groans of despair. "The poor fellow is evidently dying in terror. I suppose I should go to his assistance, but what could I say that would help him?" thought Judson to himself; and he shivered at the very thought of going into the presence of the dying man. He pulled the blankets over his head but still he heard the awful sounds and shuddered! Was he a Christian, calm and strong in the hope of a glorious immortality? Or was he shuddering upon the brink of a dark, unknown future? Finally, all became quiet in the next room. At dawn, having had no sleep, he rose and inquired of the innkeeper concerning his fellow lodger.

"He is dead." "Dead!" replied Judson. "And do you know who he was?"

"Yes," the innkeeper answered, "he was a graduate of Rhode Island College, a young fellow named Jacob Earmes."

Judson was stunned by the news. He was frozen. For three hours he stayed there in the inn. For many hours the words "Dead! Lost! Lost!" kept ringing in his ears. If Jacob Earmes, the Deist was right this is meaningless! This is meaningless! The peaceful and assured death of Christians he had often seen struck him. He felt its truth. In this state of mind he resolved to abandon his scheme of traveling, and at once returned to his house.

**Conversion of Judson**

He arrived at Plymouth, September 22, 1808, and in October of the same year entered the Theological College at Andover. He was neither converted nor was a candidate for ministry. But he was admitted because he was earnestly seeking Christ and wanted to arrive at the truth. At college, Judson made considerable progress in the languages of the Old and the New Testament but still hung on to his

**Judson's views on Conversion**

1. A deep and a godly sorrow for the sins of his past life.
2. An entire renunciation of all hope of salvation by any merits of his own.
3. An unreserved surrender of himself to Christ, relying on him alone for pardon and acceptance with God.
4. An earnest desire to live henceforth in obedience to all the requirements of the gospel. This spiritual exercise will terminate in a radical change of moral character, leading to a pure and holy life.

deist views. He was aware of his personal sinfulness and that he needed a moral transformation, but his mind could not bring itself to believe the authenticity of Christ. But God was on his trail and after many months, the light of God dawned on him. God revealed his great sinfulness and the love of Christ on the cross for him. He fully surrendered himself to Christ, the saviour. On the 2nd of December, 1808, he dedicated himself to God, and on the 28th of May, 1809 at the age of twenty-one, he joined the Third Congregational Church in Plymouth. Judson was converted!

He had experienced that love of the cross of Jesus. Till the end of his life the love of the cross enslaved him. With heart full of gratitude he would often exclaim, O! love of Christ, O! love of Christ, and tears would flow. It became his favourite theme till the end of his life.

The conversion made him radical, marked by direction and a purpose. It made him a man of one idea. It completely reversed his directions. He left seeking his glory, it lifted him up to see and seek the glory of God. He left all his literary and political ambitions and simply asked himself, how shall I so direct my life as best to please God? The conversion brought into him the realization of the great commission, "Go ye into all the world." He felt that Jesus Christ has imposed upon every one of his disciples the duty of making known the good news of salvation to his fellow men and he felt it deeply. Acknowledging such obligations, he worked with complete devotion allowing nothing to distract him.



Young Judson

Judson was deeply stirred by a printed sermon by Dr. Claudius Buchanan, a Church of England minister, who took as his text, "We have seen his star in the East". The sermon was entitled, "The Star in the East," and had for its text Matt. 2:2: "For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." He described how, as early as 1715, Ziegenbalg had translated the New Testament into Tamil and how a German missionary, Schwartz, had spent fifty years preaching the Gospel in India. Judson avidly read all he could lay his hands on concerning India, China, and what was then known as "The Golden Kingdom" or Burma.

At Andover, there was a group of young men who had the same godly desires. They were Samuel Nott Jr., who later became his co-worker in India (working in Mumbai), the four young men from Williams College — Samuel J. Mills, Jr., James Richards, Luther Rice, and Gordon Hall. Back at their previous college, these students used to meet together at night beneath a haystack near the college



Out in the woods back of Andover Seminary, when he was meditating on God that he understood the call of God to be a missionary.

grounds and pray earnestly for revival at home and in the rest of the world. They had formed a secret society, whose object was "to effect, in the person of its members, a mission or missions to the heathen." This place, later famously called as the Haystack Monument became the birthplace of American foreign missions. It was in this very place these young men consecrated themselves to the work of foreign missions.

**Decision to become a Missionary**

Judson writes of his decision of becoming a Missionary, "Out in the woods back of Andover Seminary, when I was almost disheartened. Everything looked dark. No one had gone out from this country. The way was not open. The field was far, distant, and in an unhealthy climate. I knew not what to do. All at once that last command – Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel - seemed to come to my heart directly from heaven. I could doubt no longer, but determined on the spot to obey it at all hazards, for the sake of pleasing the Lord Jesus Christ."

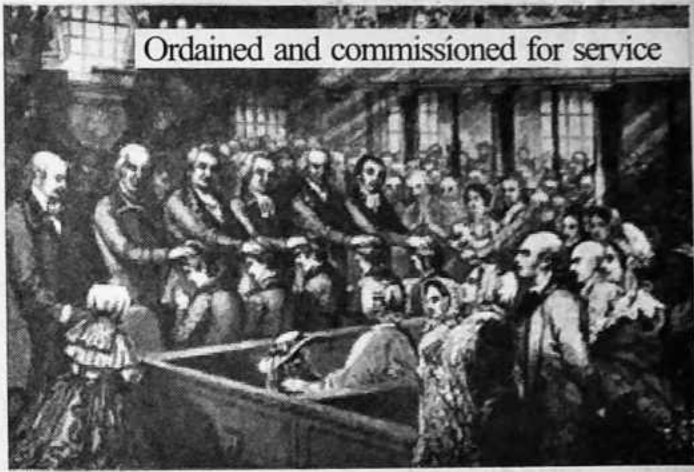
One of his father's friends, Dr. Edward Griffin, minister of the largest church in Boston, one of the most eminent preachers and leaders of that time, had noted young Judson's ability and proposed to Mr. Judson Senior that Judson should become his colleague in the ministry. Judson's parents were delighted but Judson strongly rejected the proposal. "No!" was his reply. "I shall never live in Boston. I have much farther than that to go."

**Formation of American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions**

But going further had its difficulties. At that time, there was no foreign missionary society in America. So Judson and the young men, who shared his purpose, decided to enlist as missionaries under the London Missionary Society. Accordingly, Judson wrote a letter to Dr. Bogue, the president of the seminary in Gosport, England, where the missionaries of the London society received their training.

While awaiting a reply to this letter, he and his associates talked to their teachers at Andover, and to several nearby pastors regarding their desires about going out as missionaries. They were told to put their case to the General Association, a body representing all the Congregational churches of the State of Massachusetts. On 28 June 1810, the 4 students appeared before the General Association of Congregational Ministers in Bradford and presented a statement

Professor Leonard Woods of Andover Seminary gave the sermon. To the young men, he charged, "You have chosen the noblest and most honorable work on earth. But it is also arduous and perilous… I hope you will never forget that, without Christ, you can do nothing. Without his help you can no more advance his kingdom among idolaters, than you can scatter the darkness of midnight by a word…. But if you go forth in the strength of Christ, you will be burning and shining lights in regions of death."


Ordained and commissioned for service

that they felt compelled to offer themselves for a lifetime commitment to take the Gospel overseas. The association was moved to action. American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was formed on June 28, 1810. The first meeting of that board was held on September 5, 1810. Dr. Samuel Worcester was appointed corresponding secretary.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions first looked towards the experienced London Missionary Society, for aid and co-operation and to send missionaries through them. They accordingly sent Judson to England to learn whether such co-operation would be agreeable to the London society.

Judson embarked for England, January 11, 1811, on the English ship "Packet." The ship was captured on the way by French privateers. He was imprisoned in France. An American saw him, helped him to escape to England. A normal two month voyage to England took six months for him. On the 6th of May he arrived in London. The English directors gave Judson a most courteous and affectionate welcome, but felt that a joint conduct of the missions was impracticable. They were willing to receive and support Judson and his associates as their own missionaries, but felt that such co-operation may bring complications. American Christians should take of their own missionaries!

On 18th of June he embarked at Gravesend, in the ship "Augustus," bound for New York, where he arrived on the 17th of August. On the 18th of September, 1811, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions met at Worcester, Mass., and appointed Adoniram Judson, Samuel Nott, Jr., Samuel Newell, and Gordon Hall as missionaries to labour under the direction of this Board in Asia, either in the Burmese Empire, or in Surat, or in Prince of Wales Island, or elsewhere, as providence opens the most favourable door. Thus Judson's most earnest desires of becoming a missionary began to take shape.

**Judson's Marriage**

Ann's father was a deacon at a church. Ann Hassletine was converted at the age of 16. She was teaching school where she constantly endeavoured her students to meet Jesus. Judson met Ann Hassletine at the dinner for the gathering that founded the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.



Ann Hasseltine Judson America's first female foreign missionary

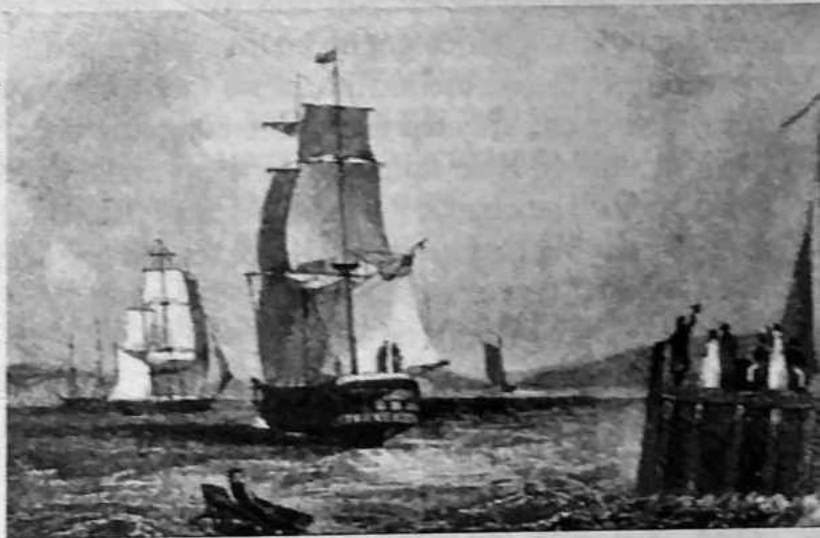
Judson wrote a letter to her father asking for her hand in marriage. Judson wrote, "I have now to ask, whether you can consent to part with your daughter early next Spring, to see her no more in this world; whether you can consent to her departure, and her subjection to the hardships and sufferings of missionary life; whether you can consent to her exposure to the dangers of the ocean; to the fatal influence of the climate of India; to every kind of want and distress; to degradation, insult, persecution, and perhaps a violent death. Can you consent to all this, for the sake of him who left his heavenly home and died for her and for you; for the sake of perishing immortal souls; for the sake of Zion, and the glory of God?"

After hearing about this letter one of their friends remarked, "If Ann were his daughter he would tie her to her bedpost rather than let her embark on such a wild scheme!" Ann's parents were cautious and left it for her to decide. She resolved to give herself to Christ and to Judson and leave all she knew for the unknown. To quote again from her journal, "Jesus is faithful; his promises are precious. No female has ever left the shores of America to spend her life among the heathen. I shall not have any single female companion. But I will not decline the offer that has been made, though so many are ready to call it a "wild, romantic undertaking".

**Missionaries for life at East**

On the 5th Feb, 1812, Judson and Ann Hasseltine, were married. On the 6th of February, he received ordination. On 19th, they embarked on "Caravan," bound for Calcutta. Also accompanied them as missionaries were Mr. and Mrs. Newell. The four planned to go to Calcutta and from there to which ever place God guides them. They knew not the place where they will labour.

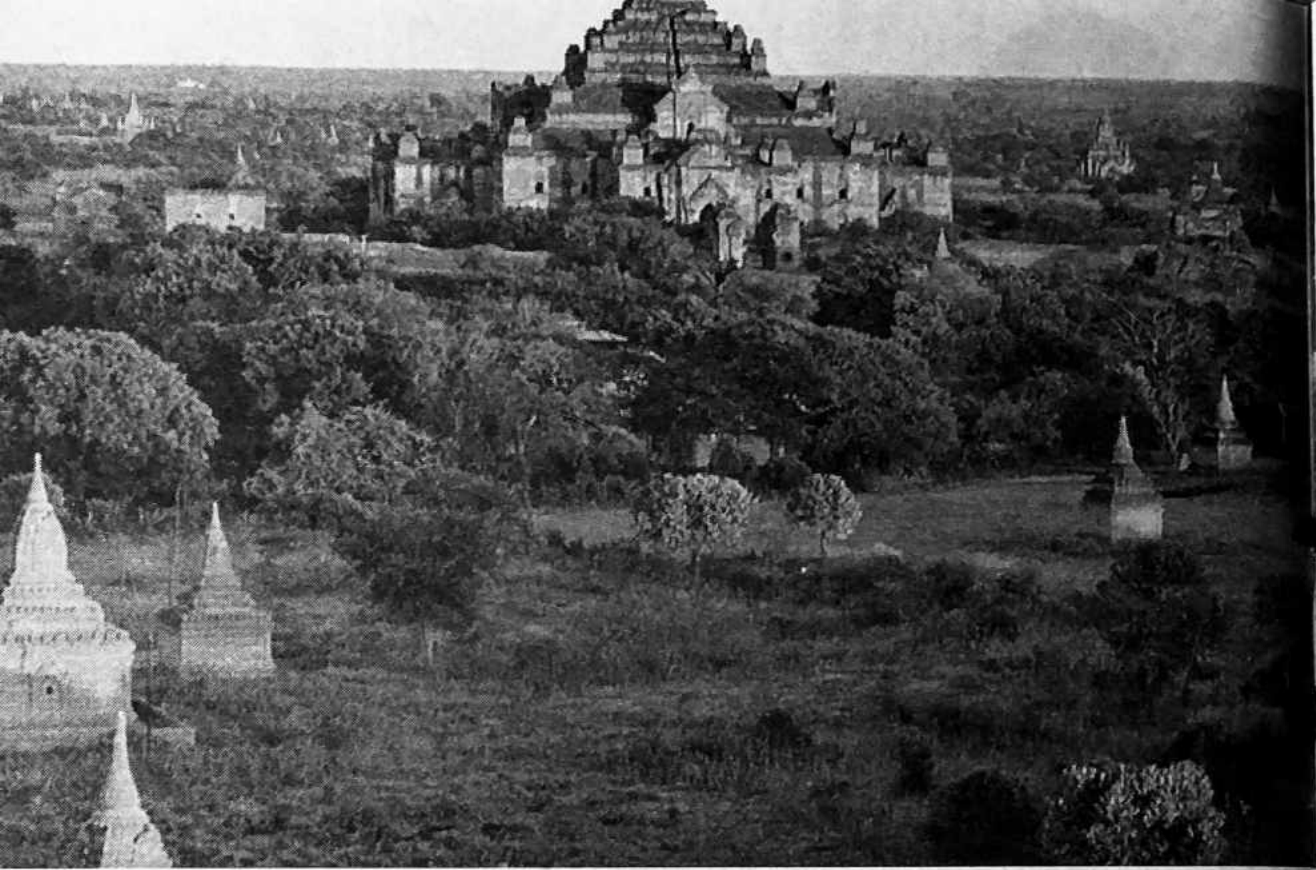
Sailing from Salem Harbour on 'Caravan'



The voyage was far too long, perilous and expensive. The British East India Company dominated in the East and was particular that no missionary activity take place as it may upset trade. It kept out missionaries at all cost.

**Arrival at Calcutta**

The four missionaries arrived in Calcutta on June 17th, and were warmly welcomed by Dr. Carey, the pioneer missionary and Bible Translator. They waited the arrival of the other group of American missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Nott and Mr. Hall and Mr. Rice, who had sailed from Philadelphia in the ship "Harmony," and who did not arrive. For three months they stayed in Calcutta knowing not where they will go from there. The Govt. at Calcutta did this task for them. Mr. and Mrs. Judson



Every inch of the land dotted with pagodas.

and Mr. Rice were ordered to report from Serampore to Calcutta by the British Government. When they appeared at the government house they were told that they must at once return to America. The only way to escape an enforced return either to England or America was to sail to Mauritius. The first ship to Mauritius had only two vacancies. Mr. and Mrs. Newell left. After great difficulty the remaining missionaries got on board a ship and after 7 month voyage when they arrived, they heard the terrible news that Mrs. Newell had died along with her baby. The event affected the whole company deeply. Mr. Newell embarked for Ceylon, and Mr. Rice sailed for America and thus Mr. and Mrs. Judson were left alone again. They had left America nearly fifteen months before, and yet after all their journeying they seemed to have reached nowhere. Mrs. Judson writes: "Oh, when will my wanderings terminate?"

**Burma - When he arrived**

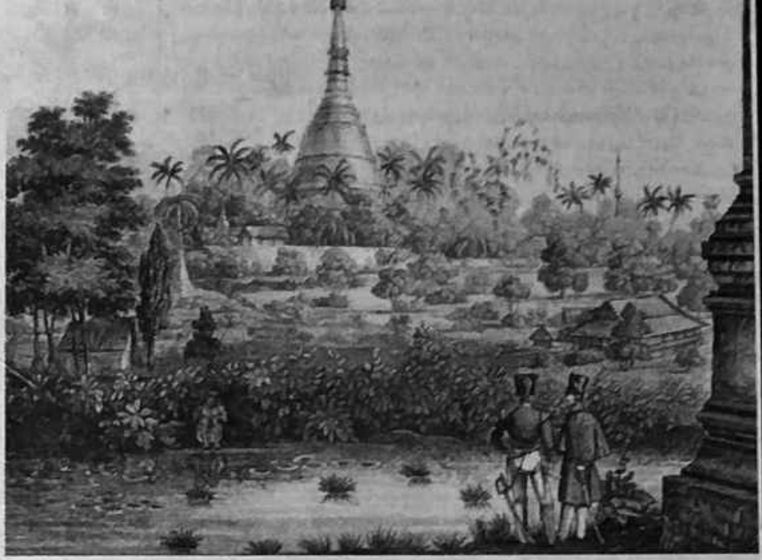
Mr. Judson and Ann sailed from Mauritius to Madras. Their arrival was reported by the authorities to the government of Bengal, but before a reply could come they boarded a Portuguese ship which sailed directly to Rangoon. On July 13, 1812, they finally arrived at Rangoon, Burma.

Mr. Judson writes, "I went on shore, just at night, to take a view of the place, and the mission house (one which Felix Carey, son of William Carey had built); but so dark and cheerless, and unpromising did all things appear, that the evening of that day, after my return to the ship, was marked as the most gloomy and distressing that we ever passed. After prayer, we experienced something of the presence of Him who cleaveth closer than a brother; something of that peace which our saviour bequeathed to his followers."

The government of Burma was tyrannical and despotic. The king was supreme in his power over the people. Rulers were proud men who believed their nation was superior to all others and invincible. Torture and mass executions kept the population in utter subjection. Buddhism was the state religion. No deviation from Buddhism was allowed. King felt his duty to promote Buddhism. One or two

Catholic priests ministered to the tiny number of foreigners. A native who wanted to convert to Catholicism was almost beaten to death. Officials were appallingly corrupt. People were steeped in idolatry. Every inch of the land dotted with pagodas. The priests were well fed, well sheltered by the king and queen. Imposing monasteries were built for them.

Felix Carey, who was in Burma had written to Serampore describing how the houses of Rangoon were miserably built, the streets were filthy, rents wickedly oppressive, the taxes very high, and the punishments barbarous, all of which only proved the country's urgent need of the Gospel.



Shwedagon Pagoda during 1825 as Judson might have seen it. The most sacred Buddhist pagoda for the Burmese. The oldest historical pagoda in Burma and the world.

In spite of all this, Mr. Judson had that deep conviction about the hope of the gospel that it is a remedy for all evil. When the gospel will be preached, the sinful nature of men would be transformed into the holy image of Christ; that every convert would become a centre of moral illumination.

**Beginning of the work**

The Burmese were reading people. They had their ancient scriptures of Buddha's teaching. The first question asked would be, "Where are your sacred books?" Mr. Judson decided to communicate the gospel by tracts and through portions of the Bible. But Mr. Judson knew well that far more important than the work of translating and distributing tracts, and portions of the Scripture, was the oral preaching of the gospel. The press can never replace the pulpit.

Mr. Judson occupied himself completely in the learning of language. On July 13, 1816, exactly three years after his arrival, he completed a work with the title, "Grammatical Notices of the Burmese Language." Three years of hard toil made him sick. Partially recovering from his illness, Mr. Judson completed on July 30, 1816, his first tract, entitled, "A View of the Christian Religion, in three parts, Historic, Didactic, and Perceptive."

In October, 1816, the Rev. G. H. Hough and his wife came to them, bringing with them a printing-press, a gift of the Serampore Mission. After they arrived they soon put the press to use. The first thousand copies of the tract and three thousand copies of a catechism in Burmese which had just been completed by Mrs. Judson, were printed and put into circulation. On May 20, 1817, Mr. Judson completed the translation of the Gospel of Matthew.

**Plodding in midst of sufferings**

To a lay mind such a Herculean task requires complete peace and comfort. Mr. Judson's first four years were wrought in confusions, problems and hopelessness. The mission house which they were occupying was situated half a mile from Rangoon, near the place of public execution, where the refuse of the city streets was thrown, and not far from the place where the dead were buried, exposed to robbers and to wild beasts. After three years in Burma, Mr. Judson writes, "Oh! What a wretched place." They decided to shift into the city. Mrs. Judson fell sick.

In those days the only medicine was a sea voyage. She sailed to Madras and returned after three months. Their son, Roger Williams, died at the age of seven months and twenty-three days. The death left them deeply shocked. Mrs. Judson writes, "Death regardless of our lonely situation, has entered our dwelling, and made one of the happiest families wretched. Our little Roger Williams, our only darling boy, was laid to grave. Eight months we enjoyed the precious little gift. But God has taught us by afflictions what we would not learn by mercies – that our hearts are His exclusive property, and that whatever rival intrudes, He will tear it away." Then Mr. Judson himself fell sick.

At the third year of the mission, though no souls were added, yet a tremendous progress was made. They acquired the language, a tract was ready for publication, press and types arrived, a grammar finished, a dictionary of the language was in progress.

**Voyage to Chittagong**

Now he could read, write, and speak Burmese. But to hold public meetings he felt the need for a native Christian helper. Mr. Judson's health was breaking down due to the intenseness of his labour to learn the language. He wanted to take a break, go in a sea voyage to Chittagong where there were few converts who spoke Burmese. There had been a mission in Chittagong. Few souls had been converted before the mission was abandoned there. He wanted to gather together the scattered converts, instruct them anew, and perhaps bring one or two of them to help him in Rangoon. It was planned to be a three month voyage.

What was conceived as a three month voyage took nine months almost taking Mr. Judson's life in the process. Contrary winds took the ship elsewhere. Their ration of food, water and clothes ran out. He was left with dry, mouldy rice and little water. He could not leave his berth. Starvation, filth, pain, and discouragement and fever afflicted him, and he begged for water. At last the little vessel came to anchor in the mud of Masulipatam, India. An English gentleman received him, nursed him and sent him back.

Equally heroic was his wife who Mr. Judson had left behind. He had left her behind at Rangoon from Christmas Day, 1817. He had expected to part only for a few weeks. But months and months passed and no news of her husband came. She occupied part of her time teaching about thirty Burmese women whom she had gathered together. Disasters swept the little mission. There were rumours that the foreigners were to be sent away. The viceroy, who had been their steady friend, was transferred and the new viceroy was a stranger to them. He summoned Mr. Hough to the court house, with the message that "If he did not tell all the truth why they were there then they would be killed." Mrs. Judson personally interceded. Her own knowledge of the language and her matchless womanly tact, conciliated the viceroy.

Asiatic cholera raged in Rangoon and the death gong sounded all the day long. Rumours of war between England and Burma filled the air. All the English ships left the harbour. Only a single vessel remained — the only way of escape. Her missionary associates, the Houghs, determined to leave the country before it was too late. They forced Ann too to board the ship. She boarded, but forced herself away and went back to the mission premises alone. Her husband, if still alive, should not return and find his mission station deserted, and himself in Burma without a companion.

**Missionary reinforcements arrive**

After this gloomy episode things brightened up. On September 19, 1818, Mr.

Colman and Wheelock, with their wives, arrived in Rangoon and joined the mission, to which Mr. Judson had safely returned.

Mr. Judson built a Zayat (A building along a roadside to rest). Its front was broad, about 30 feet, raised on posts about four feet above ground level, a veranda across the front. Using the veranda the missionary could invite passers-by to rest and discussion. Buddhist Zayat was common. This was built on the main road to the Pagoda. This would be a place where worshippers could stop in. People came with questions and Mr. Judson did his best to answer back with understanding and truth about God they served. This place consisted of a large porch and one large room inside that eventually became the first meeting place and church in the land of Burma.


Zayat

Mr. Judson toiled on year after year. He won no souls. Yet the hope of the gospel, the love of Christ and the encouraging letters and support from his Board kept him going. "Things are as bright as the promises of God." They could see Mr. Judson's love for them but they were slow in accepting something new. The deep rooted traditions, the fears of persecution of the King kept them from coming to Christ. Everyone knew that in adopting this new religion, they risk confiscation of property, imprisonment, torture, or death in its most shocking form.

The first Convert

Six years ago, Mr. Judson had come and now he was preaching to his audience in their mother tongue. Seven years and four months from his arrival he had his first convert, Moung Nau. The secret of that deep faith which enabled him to endure so many long, weary years, sowing without the joy of seeing a single blade of grain, may be understood from the following lines, which he wrote in pencil on the inner cover of a book which he was using in the compilation of the Burmese dictionary:

In joy or sorrow, health or pain,
Our course be onward still;
We sow on Burma's barren plain,
We reap on Zion's hill.

The numbers multiplied into three. Moung Nau, Moung Byaa, and Moung Thahlah.

**Trip to the Capital to meet the King**

The news that a prominent citizen was about to renounce the religion of the empire reached the minister of the king in Rangoon. He began to enquire the matter and this frightened the common people. They kept distance. The work came to a standstill. The converts however remained firm. Mr. Judson decided to meet the king and clear all doubts. If he could gain the permission of the king to propagate his religion then he could escape the annoyance and persecution of the local governors.

Mr. Judson and Mr. Colman set out for Ava, the Capital of the empire. They took various gifts for the ministers but for the king, they decide to present the Bible



Royal Palace at Ava, Burma

in six volumes, covered with gold leaf, in Burmese style, and each volume enclosed in a rich wrapper. They reached Ava, permission was obtained for audience with the king, and they met the king. The correct protocol was observed scrupulously. The king was petitioned "that royal permission be given, that we, taking refuge in the royal power, may preach our religion in these dominions, and that those who are pleased with our preaching and wish to listen to and be guided by it, whether foreigners or Burmese, may be exempt from government molestation." The king was also given a tract. He read the first two lines and threw it away. The gift of Bible was shown to him but he was disinterested. The King announced his decision, "Why do you ask for such permission? Have not the Portuguese, the English, the Mussulmans, and people of all other religions, full liberty to practise and worship according to their own customs? In regard to the objects of your petition, his majesty gives no order. In regard to your sacred books, his majesty has no use for them; take them away."

They were utterly disheartened, for their journey had been a complete failure. The emperor had refused to give them permission to propagate the Christian religion among his subjects; and any Burmese who should renounce Buddhism and become a Christian, would incur the displeasure of his sovereign.



Your Sacred books! His majesty has no use for them. Take them away.

Mr. Judson at once decided to move the mission to Chittagong, where under the protection of the British flag he could preach Christ to a Burmese-speaking population. But his converts stood firm. "Stay at least," they said, "until a little church of ten is collected, and a native teacher is set over it, and then, if you want to go we will not say no. This religion will spread of itself. The emperor cannot stop it." And then within a span of five months, seven people, one after another, were converted and baptized, among them the learned, sceptical Moung Shwa-gnong, and the first woman, Mah-men-la. The church of three native converts rapidly grew into a church of ten.

Mr. Judson's rules for Holy living

Mr. Judson wrote the following 'Rules which shows the earnestness with which he strove for personal holiness, while being engrossed as a missionary. He knew that no external services could purify the heart; that this work could be done

in no other way than by practically subjecting the whole soul to the commandments of Christ.

Rules adopted on Sunday, April 4, 1819, revised and re-adopted on Saturday, December 9, 1820, Wednesday, April 25, 1821, and on December 31, 1842.

1. Be diligent in secret prayer, every morning, afternoon and evening.
2. Never spend a moment in mere idleness.
3. Restrain natural appetites within the bounds of temperance and purity. "Keep thyself pure."
4. Suppress every emotion of anger and ill will.
5. Undertake nothing from motives of ambition, or love of fame.
6. Never do that which, at the moment, appears to be displeasing to God.
7. Seek opportunities of making some sacrifice for the good of others, especially of believers.
8. Endeavour to rejoice in every loss and suffering incurred for Christ s sake and the gospel's.

Further additions

1. Rise with the sun.
2. Read a certain portion of Burmese every day, Sundays exempted.
3. Have the Scriptures and some devotional book in constant reading.
4. Read no book in English that is not devotional.
5. Suppress every unclean thought and look.
6. Go and preach the gospel every day.

Further additions

1. More careful to observe the seasons of secret prayer.
2. Never indulge resentful feelings towards any person.
3. Embrace every opportunity of exercising kind feelings, and doing good to others, especially to the household of faith.
4. Sweet in temper, face, and word, To please an ever-present Lord.

Resolved to make the desire to please Christ, the grand motive of all my actions. God grant me grace to keep the above rules, and ever live to his glory, for Jesus Christ's sake.

**The only medicine to sickness – a Sea Voyage**

The health of Mrs. & Mr. Judson broke down completely and they were prescribed a voyage to Calcutta. All while in Calcutta, Mr. Judson constantly prayed for his little flock back home, "those few sheep that I have left in the Burmese wilderness." "Oh, may the great Shepherd," he prayed, "feed the little flock, and gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." They returned again after six months. Mr. Judson's health again broke down. In one letter, he writes, "Am just recovering from the second fit of sickness which I have had this season. The first was the cholera morbus; the present has been a fever. The second day after I was taken, Mrs. Judson was taken with the same; and for several days we lay side by side, unable to help one another. Through divine mercy we got our medicines from time to time, and are now in a convalescent state. Mrs. Judson, however, is suffering severely under the liver complaint, which, notwithstanding continual salivations, is making such rapid and alarming advances as to prevent any hope of her recovery in this part of the world." "August 6. Came to a final conclusion to send Mrs. Judson to America."

Mrs. Judson started for America. To Mrs. Judson, he wrote the following letter, "Life is short. Happiness consists not in outward circumstances. Millions of Burmese are perishing. I am almost the only person on earth who has attained their

language to such a degree as to be able to communicate the way of salvation. How great are my obligations to spend and be spent for Christ! What a privilege to be allowed to serve him in such interesting circumstances, and to suffer for him ! The heavenly glory is at hand. O, let me travel through this country, and bear testimony to the truth all the way from Rangoon to Ava, and show the path to that glory which I am anticipating. O, if Christ will only sanctify me and strengthen me, I feel that I can do all things. But in myself I am absolute nothingness; and when through grace I get a glimpse of divine things, I tremble lest the next moment will snatch it quite away. Let us pray especially for one another's growth in grace. Let me pray that the trials which we respectively are called to endure may wean us from the world, and rivet our hearts on things above. Soon we shall be in heaven. O, let us live as we shall then wish we had done. Let us be humble, unaspiring, indifferent equally to worldly comfort and the applause of men, absorbed in Christ, the uncreated Fountain of all excellence and glory."

**King's invitation to Mr. Judson and the Missionary doctor**

Shortly after Mrs. Judson left for America, missionary doctor Jonathan Price and his young wife arrived. Mrs. Price died within five months. Dr. Price's skills soon became well known and the news of his abilities, especially eye cataract operations, reached the King in Ava. He invited Dr. Price. Mr. Judson also accompanied him as a translator and set off for a second journey up the Irrawaddy river to Ava. The King had no interest in Mr. Judson. He valued Dr. Price. Through this second visit, the door to the capital city of Ava was opened. As he wanted to gain Dr. Price's services in the capital, the King granted permission to purchase property in the city where he could carry on his work. In the palace, they shared the gospel with royal secretary, the prince, eldest sister of the king, several officers, and the king himself, knowing well that the king tolerated no other religion than Buddhism. Mr. Judson and Dr. Price returned back. The character of Mr. Judson was known as a propagator of a new religion and he was not molested in any way, besides people of rank and intelligence enquired about his religion.



*The Emperor of Burma.*

Mr. Judson felt that a church can be established in the capital. Mr. Judson decided to shift to Ava, the capital. The work in Rangoon was looked after by the Houghs and Wades and the church had grown to 18. They waited for the arrival of Mrs. Ann. During this time he completed the translation of the New Testament in Burmese. As soon as she arrived, the much encouraged Mr. Judson, Ann and Dr. Price moved to the capital Ava. Things were bright, the horizon was clear and there was no sign of the coming tempest.

**Mrs. Judson returns back**

In a letter to her parents after her arrival from America, she writes, "My dear parents and sisters, After two years and a half wandering, you will be pleased to hear that I have at last arrived at home, so far as this life is concerned, and am once more quietly and happily settled with Mr. Judson. When I retrace the scenes through which I have passed, the immense space I have crossed, and the various

dangers, seen and unseen, from which I have been preserved, I am filled with gratitude and praise to that Being who has at all times been my Protector, and marked out all the way before me. I have been highly favoured and I am in under greater obligations to make sacrifices for the promotion of God's glory. I have to be spiritual and humble, be under the influences of the Holy Spirit, that a powerful impression may be made, and that I may no more wander from Him who is deserving of all my services and affections."

While moving up the river to Ava, they met Bandoola, the Burmese general, on the river, hastening with a fleet of war boats and a large army. The British had invaded Burma. As soon as they reached the capital, they were suspiciously looked upon.

**Mr. Judson's Imprisonment**

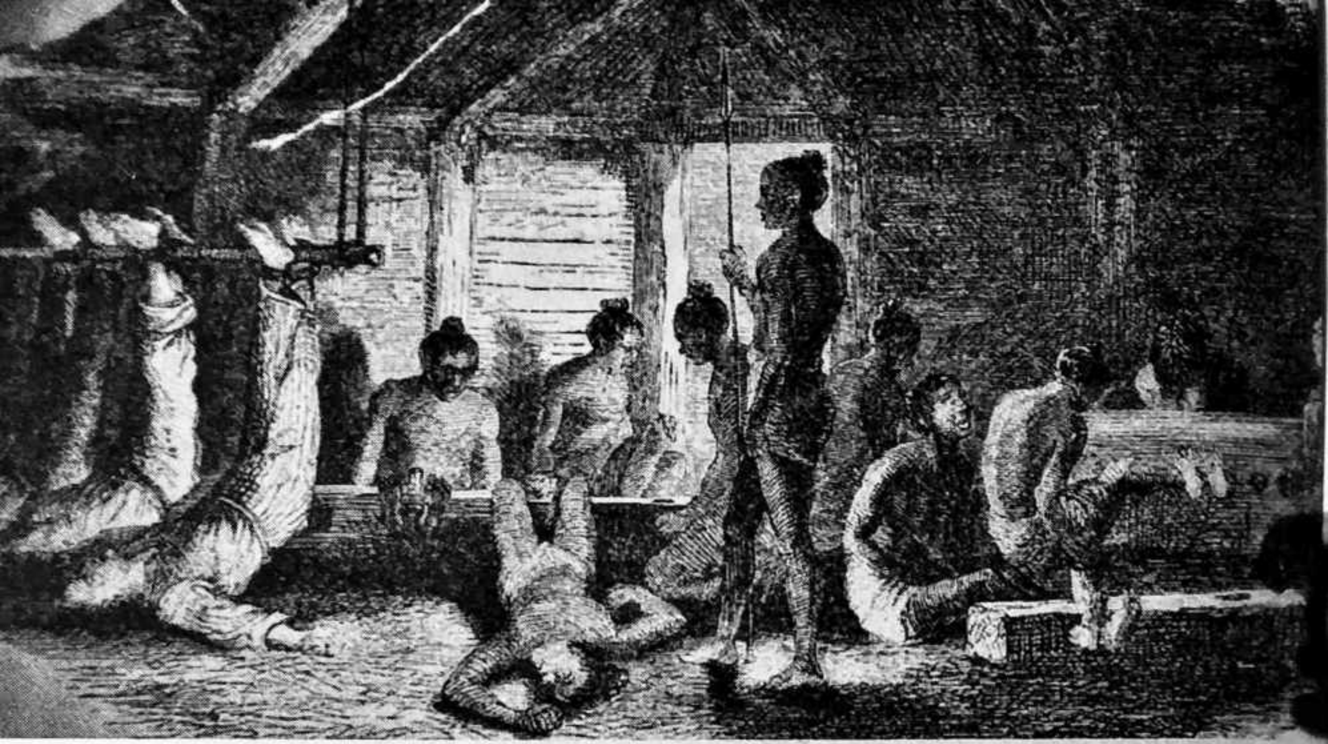
All foreigners, Mr. Judson and Dr. Price too, were at once arrested and thrown into prison (Let-Ma-Yoon prison). For the next twenty one months, Mr. Judson was imprisoned in two different prisons and also was force marched when he was sick, near to death. Yet he survived, only because of the divine Hand over him and his wife's beside him. Mr. Judson was thirty six at the time of his imprisonment, a man already left weak by many prolonged attacks of fever. Ann was left alone only with her two helpers and Mr. Judson assistant Maung Ing. Ann moved into a hut outside the prison gates so as to support her husband.

In one room, almost a hundred people of both sexes of all nationalities, nearly all naked, and half starving were packed. The prison was never washed or never swept. Rotten remains of animal and vegetable matter strewed the floor. The stench of the place was terrible. In this place of torment, Mr. Judson lay with five pairs of chains on his legs and ankles, weighing about fourteen pounds, the marks of which he carried to his dying day. At night a bamboo pole was placed between the legs and then drawn up by means of pulleys to a height which allowed their shoulders to rest on the ground while their feet hung to the bamboo.

When Mr. Judson was in prison, their third child, Maria was born. Ann nursed her infant, her two adopted girls at home while she cared for Mr. Judson and Price at the prison. The prisoners were not fed by the authorities but by their relatives. Ann faithfully fed her husband and Dr. Price, consoled them, bribed the prison staff to show some leniency, and ran from pillar to post to secure the release of them. She petitioned the queen to intercede for Mr. Judson to the king, but the queen refused. For the seven months, every day she visited some member of government, or branches of the royal family, in order to gain their influence for Mr. Judson's release but all she got was encouraging promises which only made her hopeful and little bit easier to tide over her difficulties. Her continual visit to palace seeking Mr. Judson's release won her many friends, who helped her in using their influence in the palace to destroy the impression that they

**Ann visiting Judson with little Ann**





were spies. By continual talk and occasional presents, Ann was allowed to build a little bamboo shelter for her husband, where he could be, some portion of the time, by himself.

At this time the prisoners were surprised by the arrival of a caged lion. This lion was gifted to the King and he enjoyed his lion. Then it was realized that the lion is a British emblem. That was detestable. Perhaps this lion was on the side of the British! So it, too, has to be sent to prison and made to starve. Every day as the Lion writhed in hunger; the Burmese consoled themselves that the British were conquered by the mighty Burmese. The Lion died and Mr. Judson asked for permission to use the lion's cage as his prison. His appeal failed. Ann appealed too, and was heard. The cage was converted into a room where Mr. Judson could be on his own.

**Mr. Judson forced marched to Oung-penla prison**

The war was raging full scale. The General died. Another General took charge. He ordered all prisoners to be tied together by ropes and force-marched to Oung-penla (Aungbinle prison), nine miles north of Ava. It was agonizing walk. Only through the generous help of fellow sufferers did Mr. Judson survive. There was more space at Oung-penla and the prisoners were allowed to work at improving their compound. Ann immediately followed Mr. Judson to Oung-penla. There she managed to rent a small room from one of the jailers. Ann was exhausted by the conflict. She became too weak to feed little Maria. By making presents to the jailers, she obtained permission for Mr. Judson to come out of prison and take the starving infant around the village begging milk from mothers who were nursing infants themselves. Exhausted in head, heart and hands, Ann fell sick with cerebral meningitis. When Mr. Judson was informed, he could not



sleep the whole night.

The British army advanced to the capital. After 21 months in prison, the King needed a translator who could read and prepare documents that would be sent back and forth between Britain and the King of Burma. Judson was the most capable to do it and they were released.

**Mr. Judson's release**

Ann had not come to the prison for many days. He knew that she was very sick. "Is Ann still alive?" thought Mr. Judson and hurried down the street as fast as his maimed ankles would permit. When he reached the house, he saw a Burmese woman holding on her knees a thin baby, so dirty that he could not think that it was his own. On the bed, lay a human object no more recognizable than his child. The face, pale and the body shrank to the last degree of starvation. There lay the faithful and devoted wife who had followed him from prison to prison, doing her very best to care and console them.

After Mr. Judson's release they were well cared for by the Britishers. The Judsons recuperated well. They arrived in Rangoon back at the mission station after a gap of 2 years and 3 months. Mrs. Judson writes, "We have safely arrived in Rangoon, and once more find ourselves in the old mission house! What shall we render to the Lord for all his mercies?"

Through all these testing times the manuscript of the translation of the Bible was kept most miraculously. When Mr. Judson was imprisoned, Ann sewed it in a pillow and Mr. Judson himself kept it in the prison. The jailor always looked doubtfully as to why Mr. Judson needed such a bulky pillow. The pillow was left behind when there was a sudden move to Oung-penla, but some hours later the faithful disciple, Moung Ing, visited the site, found and preserved the pillow.

**Move to British Burma**

The war reduced the church in Rangoon from 18 to only four. The British established a new town, which was to be the capital of the new territory — the seat of government and the headquarters of the army. The town was named Amherst. The Judsons and the four converts moved to the new town.

Mr. Judson was requested by the Mr.. Crawford, the civil commissioner of the new province, to accompany him as a member of a delegation to negotiate a commercial treaty with the Burmese king at Ava. At first he firmly declined. But he was assured that a clause will be inserted for religious freedom for all Burmese, he accepted the invitation as he had long desired religious freedom for Burmese and travelled to Ava where he remained for two and half months.



**Death of Ann and daughter Maria**

While he remained at Ava, a sealed envelope was placed in hands informing about his wife's death. On October 24th, 1826, in the thirty-seventh year of her age, she breathed her last.

Thus later known as the 'the Mother of Modern Missions', Ann Hasseltine Judson left behind a great heritage. She had written a catechism in Burmese, and translated the books of Daniel and Jonah into Burmese. She was the first Protestant to translate any of the scriptures into Thai when in 1819 she translated the Gospel of Matthew.



'Weep with me, my dear sister and parent, for my beloved wife is no more. There lies, enclosed in a coffin, the form of her I so much loved, the wife of my youth, the source and centre of my domestic happiness. Let us go, my child, to her grave, and plant some flowers there, and water them with our tears, and wait for her resurrection at the last day; for her spirit has been conveyed by angels to Abraham's bosom, and now exists in paradise with the spirits of the just made perfect. And she will come again and resume the form which now perishes in the grave. Then she will be bright as the sun, beautiful as an angel, immortal as the Saviour.'

Sorrows do not come as single spies, but by battalions. On April 24, 1827, his little daughter Maria breathed her last, aged two years and three months. Three months later he came to know the death of his own father.

That same year Mr. Judson wrote to Ann's sisters:

"Death mocks at us, and tramples our dearest hopes and our lives in the dust. Dreadful tyrant, offspring and ally of sin! But go on now, and do thy worst. Thy time will come. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Yes, awful power, thou shalt devour thyself and die. And then my angelic Ann, and my meek blue-eyed Roger, and my tender-hearted, affectionate, darling Maria,—my venerable father, you, my dear sisters, that still remain, our still surviving parents, and I hope, myself, though all unworthy, shall be rescued from the power of death and the grave, and we know assuredly that we shall die no more, we shall make heaven's arches ring with songs of praise to Him, who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

**Seeking for Perfect sanctification**

His family was gone. His little church at Rangoon was all but extinct. Very few Burmese believed in the living God. He became deeply lonely and sad. But this was a stage in life where he sought to attain the perfect sanctification in life which he always wanted to achieve. He writes to his sister,

1. Observe the seven seasons of secret prayer every day.
2. Set a watch before the mouth, and keep the door of lips.
3. See the hand of God in all events, and thereby become reconciled to his dispensations.
4. Embrace every opportunity of exercising kind feelings, and doing good to others, especially to the household of faith.
5. Consult the internal monitor on every occasion, and instantly comply with his dictates.
6. Believe in the doctrine of perfect sanctification attainable in this life.

Mr. Judson became convinced that men can achieve higher attainments in holiness if they earnestly and honestly desire it. He made a conscious effort to crucify every aspect of self which he believed may come in the way of achieving perfect

sanctification. A zealous and a passionate effort, akin to that of the forty day fast of our Lord.

i. Mr. Judson was invited by the Britishers to negotiate with the king of Burma. The British paid him well for this. Mr. Judson firmly believed that as he was a missionary of the Board, the payment he gets from his secular engagements is not his property but that of the board. As a result he gave over to the Board 5200 Rs and 2000 Rs, the money he was paid being a member of the delegation to Ava.

ii. Mr. Judson had been closely associated with many of the civil and military officers of the British government. He soon felt that meeting such people was not mere relaxation, but took too much time that might be devoted exclusively for the Burmese. The first person to whom he communicated his intention of never again dining out was Sir Archibald Campbell himself, the Incharge of the whole province, his close friend who had secured his release from the prison.

iii. About 12000 Rs was with him, his own earnings, and the gifts of his relatives and personal friends and interest on it. He sent it to the Board or in Mr. Judson's words 'to Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.'

iv. Encouraged by the Lord's commendation of the poor widow who gave away her two mites, Mr. Judson and Mr. Wade issued a combined letter to the Board that instead of 1/10 they will henceforth be giving away 2/10 of their income for the work of God.

v. In youth he had an intense desire for reputation, a desire to be someone great. To do away with this weakness and also being anxious of any posthumous reputation, he ordered his sister to completely destroy all his letters. He returned the honorary DD conferred upon him five years before by the Brown University.

vi. He wrote to the Secretary of the board to lessen his allowance by a quarter as he felt that it is sufficient.

vii. He built a small cottage in the woods to spend his time with God. He fasted often.

Later in his diary, he had written the following points for Self-Denial.

✦ The passion for neatness, uniformity, and order, in arrangement of things in dress, in writing, in grounds.
✦ A nature to be annoyed at the little improprieties in the behaviour and conversation of others.
✦ A desire for advantage, to get honour. "Come shame, come sorrow," &c.
A desire for personal ease and comfort, and reluctance to suffer inconvenience.
✦ Unwillingness to bear contradiction.

All the above said measures were taken with a deep conviction that 'faith content with merely refraining from outward sins, and attending to the ordinary duties of religion, that faith which allows us to spend all our days in serving self, that faith which prompts no self-denial, that faith which consists merely in a correct belief of the doctrines of grace, is no faith at all.' He writes to his sister, "I lament the early death of my beloved wife, chiefly because it has deprived me of an opportunity of leading her into paths that I have but lately discovered myself; discovered, I say, not entered. God give me grace for the latter."

The last words that Mrs. Judson spoke was that her husband should not join the services of the British but should confine himself exclusively to the duties of the

missionary. Mrs. Judson's fears were not unfounded. Earlier Felix Carey, and now Dr. Price and fellow missionary Hough resigned from the Mission and were consumed in secular work.

**Consolidation by Preaching and Printing**

The work started again in British Burma. Burma Proper was closed for missionaries. With renewed strength, vision, and genius, Mr. Judson directed the work. China, Bangkok and Singapore came into the horizon. Mr. and Mrs. Wade, Mr. and Mrs. Broadman joined Mr. Judson. They shifted to a bigger town of Maulmain (Mawlamyine) under the British crown. A school for girls and for boys was started. Zayats were built in different part of the town and were occupied by Mr. Wade and Mr. Judson. The New Testament had been translated, and portions of it, together with several tracts, had been printed. The translation of the Old Testament took a beating as all they did was to preach and preach. A native Christian Moung Ing expressed his desire to undertake a missionary excursion to Tavoy and Mergui and later on and he was ordained pastor of the Church at Amherst. Broadmans moved to Tavoy. Ko Tha a was ordained pastor of the church in Rangoon where the work was revived. Ko Man-poke, a scholar in the Taling language got converted and he translated all Burmese tracts into the Taling. Burmese and Hindus too were getting converted. In a year almost 30 were added. Mr. Judson writes, "To conclude this paper, I hope that the light is gradually spreading around us, more extensively. Truth is spreading slowly on every side ; prejudices are weakening ; opposition is growing more violent in some parts, and in other parts it seems subsiding."



Mr. & Mrs. Wade



A considerable work was going on in the Literature front. About 13 titles were being printed in Burmese and some in Taling. Books were written, translated and printed.

**Entering Burma Proper into Prome**

Mr. Judson once again tried to enter Burma Proper. He went to Rangoon. The governor, a-twen-woon Moung K who was familiar with Mr. Judson earlier received him gladly. Mr. Judson was happy to see the spirit of enquiry. Feeling that he was called to work in the interior, he goes to another major town Prome. He requested the permission of the governor to take possession of an old, abandoned Zayat. The request was granted hesitantly as rumour spread that Mr. Judson was a spy of the British. Inspite of this, Mr. Judson went around and used every opportunity to talk to people. The Zayat was usually crowded with enquirers. The other three members of Mr. Judson's team were also busy preaching the good news. All the members placed themselves in different positions. Mr. Judson usually took his place in a shed built under a towering idol. Crowds and crowds gathered to hear him. Some said that he was speaking the truth, some said that he was deceiving the people. Mr. Judson writes, "Another day of hard conflict. The enemy begins to be alarmed, and his forces come on fresh and fierce, while we, few in number, have to sustain the combat without any human reinforcement. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. At night, felt very weak in strength, so much so that I was unable to go through with the evening service as usual."

The news of Mr. Judson's arrival in Prome, distributing tracts among the inhabitants, reached the king in Ava. The king ordered him out. Thus after 3 ½ months of labour at the foot of the great idol the town worships, Mr. Judson moved

The School that Dr. Judson and Ann started are now large schools in Moulmain



out with sorrow, but satisfied that he and his people could preach the crucified Christ to the town founded before the birth of Christ. Mr. Judson writes, "Farewell to thee, Prome! Willingly would I have spent my last breath in thee and for thee. But thy sons ask me not to stay; and I must preach the gospel to other cities also, for therefore am I sent."

Having returned to Rangoon, Mr. Judson continued with renewed vigour and urgency. Mr. Judson writes, "We continue to distribute about forty tracts a day, and should gladly double the number. How long we shall be allowed a footing in Rangoon is very uncertain. Rangoon is the key of the country. From this place tracts go into every quarter. I am more and more convinced that Burma is to be evangelized by tracts and portions of Scripture. The press is the grand engine for Burma. Every pull of brother Bennett at the press sends another ray of light through the darkness of the empire.

Things began to brighten up. More and more were added to the church. In 1831, 18 years after they arrived, Mr. Judson writes, "We have three lovely churches, and about two hundred baptized converts, and some are in glory. The most prominent feature in the mission at present is the surprising spirit of inquiry that is spreading everywhere, through the whole length and breadth of the land. I sometimes feel alarmed, like a person who sees a mighty engine beginning to move, over which he knows he has no control."

**Death of Boardman**

Death struck again. Boardman died while returning back from a Karen village where he saw 38 Karens being baptised. Mr. Judson writes, "One of the brightest luminaries of Burma is extinguished; dear brother Boardman has gone to his eternal rest. He fell gloriously at the head of his troops, in the arms of victory; thirty-eight wild Karens having been brought into the camp of King Jesus since the beginning of the year, besides the thirty-two that were brought in during the two preceding years. I have great confidence in sister Boardman, that she will not desert her husband's post, but carry on the work which he has gloriously begun."


George Dana Boardman

Mr. Judson writes to sister Boardman, "Take the bitter cup with both hands, and sit down to your repast. You will soon learn a secret, that there is sweetness at the bottom.



Karen man

You will find it the sweetest cup that you ever tasted in all your life. I think, from what I know of your mind, that you will not desert the post, but remain to carry on the work which he gloriously began. The Karens of Tavoy regard you as their spiritual mother; and the dying prayers of your beloved are waiting to be answered in blessings on your instructions."

The cry of the unsaved was ever haunting Mr. Judson. He writes, "The great annual festival of Shway Dagong is just past, during which I have distributed nearly ten thousand tracts, 'giving to none but those who ask.' Priests and people, from the remotest regions, are alike eager to get our writings. I should have given away double the number, if I could have obtained sufficient supplies. But poor brother Bennett cannot, single handed, with bad type, and not yet familiar with Burmese printing, answer all the demands. May God forgive all those who desert us in our extremity. May he save them all. But surely, if any sin will lie with crushing weight on the trembling, shrinking soul, when grim death draws near, if any sin cover the face of the final Judge with an angry frown, it is the sin of turning a deaf ear to the mournful cry of ten millions of immortal beings, who, by their darkness and misery, cry, day and night, "Come to our rescue, ye bright sons and daughters of America, COME AND SAVE US, FOR WE ARE SINKING INTO HELL."



Karen woman

**Mr. Judson's prayer life**

Mr. Judson was a man of prayer. So was written in his journal,

Topics to encourage Prayer

- ✦ Wrestling Jacob, Friend at midnight, The unjust judge.
- ✦ Satan fights neither with small nor great, save only with the spirit of prayer.
- ✦ A prayer made in great struggle, in wandering of thought to do some work, is more pleasing to God, and helps the soul forward in grace more than a long prayer without temptation.
- ✦ Whatever others do, let my life be a life of prayer.
- ✦ Get the King's daughter, and you get all; the grace of devotion is the daughter of God.

In a letter to his sister, he writes, "“Nothing is impossible to industry," said one of the seven sages of Greece. Let us change the word industry for persevering prayer, and the motto will be more Christian, and worthy of universal adoption. I am persuaded that we are all more deficient in a spirit of prayer than in any other grace. God loves importunate prayer so much that he will not give us much blessing without it; and the reason he loves such prayer is, that he loves us, and knows that it is a necessary preparation for our receiving the richest blessings which he is waiting and longing to bestow."

Mr. Judson writes, "The first duty of every lover of Christ is to enter constantly within the veil, offering himself sacrifice to God, to obtain some sensible communion with the great Invisible; and his second, to come forth with a shining face, as Moses, and be ready to speak and do whatever God, by his word, providence, and indwelling Spirit, shall appoint."

During Sabbath, he would read the Bible audibly and at times when the revelation of the verse struck him he would weep. During the close of his life he would spend much time in prayer and Bible reading. Each new revelation became a topic for his prayer. He felt his duty to pray for his children and his children's children, that his vision and desires should be transmitted to them that he may see the unbroken chain before the throne of God.

**Mr. Judson's experiences of Evangelism**

Christianity was to be spread by the contact of individual mind with individual mind, and hence he diligently sought every possible occasion for personally speaking to men about the salvation by Christ. By gradual process of illumination the way will be prepared to preach the gospel. He followed the example of Christ and his apostles who proclaimed the news of salvation without caring about ease, or taste, or love of civilized society. A nation can be evangelized by its own population only. Foreigners can bring the light and transfer it. But it is to the local preachers who must carry the gospel to their brethren. He directed all energy in training native talent. In Maulmain and Rangoon, he employed several local assistants, whom he sent daily to the different parts of the city and vicinity to preach and converse with their countrymen, and read and distribute tracts. When he went into the jungle, he always was accompanied by the native Christians. These he would send away, two by two, into those parts of the forest to which he could not himself penetrate, directing them, and receiving their reports as they returned.

Mr. Judson's advice to missionaries

- Work for Jesus because you love him and not for any other considerations.
- It is a life work, not for a limited time.
- Choose a fit & healthy life partner that your family may be not a burden on the mission.
- Start slowly and patiently.
- Be careful of the reactions when you reach the mission field. The reality may be different from the written record. At times you may feel as why you have started at all.
- Be careful of the reactions after you learn the language and start preaching. You may be tired and worn out by preaching to a disobedient and gainsaying people. You may want to go back and Satan will sympathize too and he will opportunities of some chapel of ease, or a government situation, some professorship or editorship, some literary or scientific pursuit, some system of schools; anything, in a word, that will help you, without much surrender of character, to slip out of real missionary work. Such a temptation will form the crisis of your disease.
- Beware of pride; not the pride of proud men, but the pride of humble men that secret pride which grows out of consciousness that we are esteemed by the great and good. Confess your faults freely, and as publicly as circumstances will require.
- Never lay up money for yourselves or your families. Trust in God from day to day, and verily you shall be fed.
- Beware of that laziness which leads to a neglect of bodily exercise.

**Season of Reaping**

After a period of sowing with tears, they were reaping in joy. Mr. Judson, Mr. & Mrs. Wade, Mr. & Mrs. Bennett, Miss Cummings, Miss Macomber, Miss Gardiner, Mr.. and Mrs. Jones, Mr. Kincaid, Mr. & Mrs. Cutter, Mr. & Mrs.

Hancock, Mr. & Mrs. Vinton, Mr. & Mrs. Osgood, Mr. Comstock, Mr. Mason, Mrs. Boardman, Mr. Howard, Mr. Ingalls, local workers like Ko Thah-a, Tau-nali, Pan-lah, Ko Myat-kyau had laboured or were labouring in different mission station of Tavoy, Maulmain, and North of Maulmain, Amherst, Chummerah, Maubee, Mergui, Newville, Rangoon.

Local assistants would go out into the town to preach, occupy Zayat, distribute tracts, and to counsel. Other were employed in revising publications, copying for the press, and reading proof sheets in different languages. Two million pages of tracts and translations of Scriptures had been printed. Mr. Judson writes, "My days are commonly spent in the following manner: the morning in reading Burmese; the forenoon in a public zayat with some assistant, preaching to those who call; the afternoon in preparing or revising something for the press, correcting proof sheets, & etc.; the evening in conducting worship in the native chapel, and conversing with the assistants, and other native Christians or inquirers.

On 31 Dec, 1832 Mr. Judson reported that there were 386 native converts and 130 foreign converts, thus there were 516 converts since the start of the mission of whom were 17 excluded for various reasons. In 1833, the numbers increased to 596, In 1834, to 666, In 1835, to 786, in 1836, to 1144.

Mr. Judson approved and welcomed the first single women as missionary to Burma. Sarah Cummings arrived in 1832. Cummings proved herself, choosing to work alone with Karen evangelists in the malaria-ridden Salween River valley north of Maulmain, but within two years she died of fever. In 1835, a second single woman, Eleanor Macomber, after five years of mission to the Ojibway Indians in Michigan, joined the mission in Burma. Alone, with the help of Karen evangelistic assistants, she planted a church in a remote Karen village and nurtured it. She lived five years and died of jungle fever.

**Mr. Judson's marriage to Sarah Boardman**

Mr. Judson had written to Sarah Boardman not to desert the post where her husband had so heroically worked. And indeed she spent three years of widowhood toiling among the Karens at Tavoy. Her friends in America had always appealed to her to return home for her own sake and the sake of her little boy. She conducted her schools with such tact and ability that the English Government wanted to start schools throughout the provinces on the pattern of Mrs. Boardman's schools at Tavoy. She made long missionary tours into the Karen jungles. Mr. Judson too had spent eight years of loneliness and toil since he laid his beloved Ann. On April 10, 1834, Mr. Judson was married to Mrs. Sarah.

After the marriage, Mr. Judson writes, "I am very happy with her. She is possessed of a very affectionate, amiable, pious spirit; is well acquainted with the Burmese language, and is a great help to me in all respects. We keep house by ourselves, and shall probably remain in Maulmain for the present, perhaps all the rest of our lives. I have a church of eighty -four converted natives under my care, and am also revising and superintending the printing of the Old Testament.

After 1839, Mr. Judson's health deteriorated with lung disease. It led to the loss of voice, pain in the organs of speech, and soreness in the lungs. In those days the only cure to disease was a sea voyage and Mr. Judson took many for the restoration of his health but it gave only temporary benefit. He could not preach and so spent the remaining years in labour with the pen. In 1839, he started on a voyage to Calcutta leaving his work and wife behind for health reasons. Mr. Judson writes, "My cough has almost left me. The bosom of my family is almost the only bright spot that remains to me on earth."

**Burmese Bible**



One of the first copies of Judson's Burmese Bible

In midst of his toils and sufferings and afflictions, he kept on translating the Bible steadily. For Mr. Judson, preaching came first. But the translation of the Bible was essentially necessary to the permanent establishment of Christianity in Burma, and no other living man was qualified for the work than Mr. Judson. Mr. Judson writes, "I never read a chapter without pencil in hand, and Griesbach and Parkhurst at my elbow; and it will be an object to me through life to bring the translation to such a state that it may be a standard work." "The preached gospel and the written word are the two arms which are to pull down the kingdom of darkness and build up the Redeemer's. Let us not cut off one of these arms; for the other will, by itself, be comparatively powerless, as the history of the church in every age will testify. There is only one book in the world which has descended from heaven, or, as I tell the Burmese, there is only one golden lamp which God has suspended from heaven to guide us hither. O that one copy of the Burmese Bible were safely deposited in every village where the language is understood!"

After twenty-one years of patient toil, Mr. Judson completed the translation of the Bible into the Burmese on January 31, 1834. He then took seven years more to revise his first work and at last on October 24, 1840, the entire book was ready for the press. Moung En was a faithful fellow-labourer with Mr. Judson in the translation work. "Thanks be to God, I can now say I have attained. I have knelt down before him with the last leaf in my hand, and imploring his forgiveness for all the sins which have polluted my labours in this department, and his aid in future efforts to remove the errors and imperfections which may be in, I have commended it to his mercy and grace; for his glory. May He make His own inspired word, now complete in the Burmese tongue, the grand instrument of filling all Burma with songs of praise to our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen." "I have lived to see accomplished the particular objects on which I set my heart when I commenced a missionary life. And why should I wish to live longer? But the very thought brings joy to my soul. For, though I am a poor, poor sinner, and know that I have never done a single action which can claim the least merit or praise, glory is before me, interminable glory, through the blood of the Lamb, the Lamb for sinners slain."

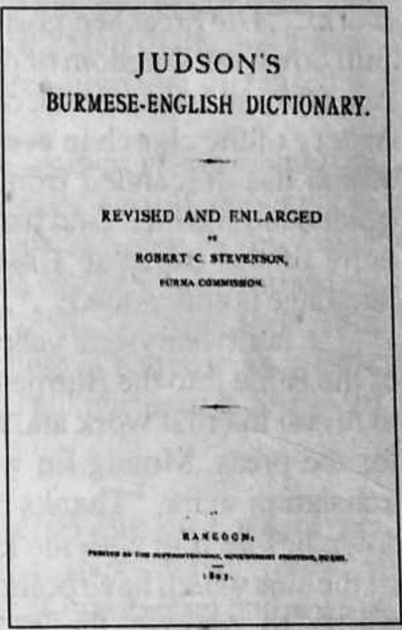
Competent judges pronounce the Mr. Judson's Bible as the best translation that has appeared and like Luther's Bible it will probably be the Bible for three centuries to come. In the 1950s, Burma's Buddhist prime minister U Nu told the Burma Christian Council "Oh no, a new translation is not necessary. Mr. Judson captures the language and idiom of Burmese perfectly and is very clear and understandable."

**The Burmese Dictionary**

At his arrival, when Mr. Judson realised that much of the Buddhist religious thought was expressed in Pali language he started to compile a Pali-Burmese Dictionary of 4000 words. Years later Mr. Judson, as soon as he had finished the Burmese Bible, was pressed upon by the Board to compile a dictionary of



This location is where the first printing press was brought and set up. Also the place where the first Burmese Bible, dictionary and hymn book were printed.


JUDSON'S
BURMESE-ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

REVISED AND ENLARGED
BY
ROBERT C. STEVENSON,
BURMA COMMISSION

RANGOON.

Burmese language for use of future missionaries. Mr. Judson though unwilling, but because his voice had almost gone, started to work on the dictionary. Mr. Judson decided that he had to work on the English – Burmese as well as Burmese – English. Mr. Judson worked very hard on the dictionary, as his wife put it, 'like a galley slave'. At the close of 1848, he completed the English - Burmese and started the Burmese – English. He got the help of an excellent Burmese scholar, a priest at Ava to do it. Mr. Judson did not live to complete the Burmese dictionary. As he had desired before his death, Mrs. Judson gave the manuscripts to his trusted friend and associate in missionary toil, Mr.Stevens, who completed the work.

**Return to America**

Mr. Judson did not return to America despite frequent invitations from the Board. But in 1841, Mrs. Judson's and the Children's health began to deteriorate and they had to take a sea voyage to Calcutta. Though the sea air brought them good health, hot Bengal climate made them sick and their youngest son Henry died there. They returned back to Burma.

Mrs. Judson's condition again became serious, and the only hope of saving her lay in a voyage to America. On April 26, 1845, Mr. and Mrs. Judson, with their three elder children, two Burmese assistants, for Burmese dictionary, embarked on the ship “Paragon” bound for London. They left behind their three younger children in the tender care of the missionaries at Maulmain. While on voyage, Mrs. Judson improved so much that Mr. Judson decided to send her alone while he would return to work. He sent back the two Burmese assistants and waited for a ship for Mrs. Judson. Her health once again relapsed and he decided not to leave her but accompany her to America. She became seriously ill during the voyage and died at St. Helena. She died at 3 in the morning, was buried and they left at 6 in the evening for their voyage further. Mr. Judson writes, “For a few days, in the solitude of my cabin, with my poor children crying around me, I could not help abandoning myself to heart-breaking sorrow. But the promises of the gospel came to my aid, and faith stretched her view to the bright world of eternal life, and anticipated a happy meeting with those beloved beings whose bodies are mouldering at Amherst and St. Helena.”



Mrs. Judson died at 3 in the morning, was buried and Judson left with his motherless kids at 6 in the evening for their voyage further.

Mr. Judson, with his motherless children, arrived in Boston. He was feeble in health and sick at heart; anxious to return. The welcome was stupendous. Halls were full and papers reported his every move. But the one who had worked so far away from limelight could not take it. He shunned from public, could not address as he had lost his voice, and requested the board to leave him alone. But invitations came from everywhere. At one place, he addressed so, "My dear young Brethren, There is one, and only one, right path for every man, for each one of you to follow, in order to ensure the full approval of God, and the greatest success in your efforts to do good and glorify him. Seek that one path. There may, indeed, be some other path, not very far from the right one, in which you can accomplish something for the cause of truth ; but nowhere can you do so much as in that one. Do not, my brethren, content your selves with anything short of finding the one path marked out for you by the will of Heaven; and when you have found it, walk in it, straight forward, and let nothing turn you aside."

At another place he said so, "You have but one life to live in which to prepare for eternity. If you had four or five lives, two or three of them might be spent in carelessness. But you have one, only. Every action of that one life gives colour to your eternity. How important, then, that you spend that life so as to please the Saviour, the blessed Saviour, who has done everything for you!"

Once he was shown two newspaper articles in which he was compared to St. Paul and to St. John. Mr. Judson exclaimed, with a sorrowfulness, "O!, how little, how little do they know me! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And I do not want to be like any of them," he said, energetically "Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas, nor any other mere man. I want to be like Christ. We have a great many aids and encouragers along the Christian path; but only one perfectly safe example, only One who, tempted like as we are in every point, is still without sin. I want to follow him only, copy his teachings, drink in his spirit, place my feet in his footprints, and measure their short comings by these, and these alone. It is not safe to take any man, not even an inspired apostle, for a pattern. O! To be more like Christ!"

Mr. Judson left America leaving his two sons back. Mr. Judson writes, Dear Adoniram and Elnathan, It is most painful to reflect that I shall only be a few days with you before I embark for Burma. You, my two dear boys, that I have loved so

much, and tried to take care of, by day and by night, for so many years. But this separation must take place, and I must commit you to the kind friends who now take charge of you, in hope that God will incline their hearts, as hitherto, to do all for you that is necessary and best, and in the most precious hope that you will become children of God, and be prepared to meet me and your departed mother before the throne of God, with exceeding joy. When George writes, add a few lines, each of you, that I may see your writing, though I cannot see your sweet faces."

**Back to the Field**

On the 11th of July they embarked, with several other missionaries, on board the ship Faneuil Hall, bound to Maulmain. They arrived there, after a pleasant passage, on the 30th of November following. Mr. Judson, as soon as possible, resumed his labour at the dictionary.

Mr. Judson made another attempt to enter Burma Proper on February 15, 1847. The king was dead and his son was reigning. Though he heard that the new king had more hatred to gospel, the very thought that Maulmain had many, while Burma proper had no missionaries, haunted him. He and his family left for Rangoon. The king and his younger brother, devote Buddhists led to a revival of Buddhism in Burma. The king was more intolerant to missionary activities than the former king. Any act of proselytising was dealt very seriously either with death or imprisonment. Mr. Judson was allowed to be in Burma because he was a foreigner and was working on the Burmese dictionary. Mr. Judson tried to reorganize the church in secret. Within five months he was able to collect a congregation of 11, and within another month, 30. Meetings were held behind closed doors. Tracts were not distributed in the street. It was just kept in a box near the door and people hungrily took it and stuffed it in their dress.

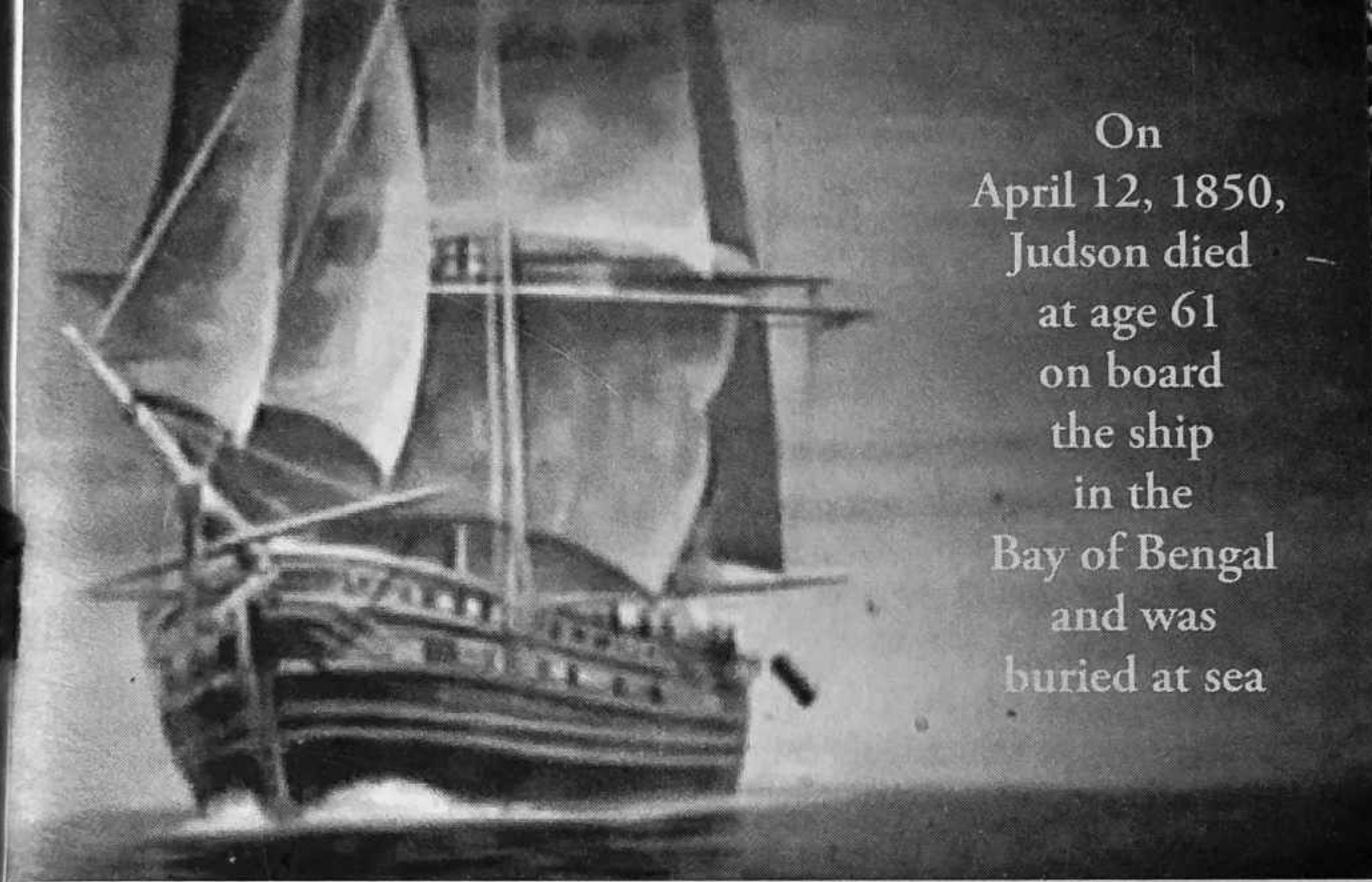
When Judsons were just getting settled at Rangoon, they received the news that there house in Maulmain caught fire and the house completely gutted in fire. Mr. Judson writes, "The house where we deposited our best clothes and most valuable goods, many of them presents from dear friends that we shall see no more, has taken fire and burned down, with all its contents. I estimate the value about seven hundred rupees; But all these things are ordered well. And why are our houses and property allowed to be burned up? And why are those most dear to us, and most qualified to be useful in the cause, torn from our arms, and dashed into the grave, and all their knowledge and qualification with them? Because infinite wisdom and love will have it so. Because it is best for us, and best for them, and best for the cause, and best for the interests of eternity, that it should be so. And blessed be God, we know it, and are thankful, and rejoice, and say, Glory be to God."

The great sufferings he bore, the graves he dug, the tears, the chains, fashioned him into a great example for many to learn from his example. Mr. Judson writes,

Blessed be God for all, For all things here below;
For every loss and every cross, To my advantage grow

**Mr. Judson's attitude towards work**

Once when he heard the death of a missionary and a fear expressed as to what will happen to the work, Mr. Judson remarked, "Our puny, polluted offerings of works are not necessary to God? He permits them to work, as a favour, in order to do them good, personally, because he loves them, and desires to honour them, not because he needs them. The withdrawal of any man from his harvest field, however learned, and wise, and good, however well prepared, even by a life-long discipline for that particular part of the field, is no loss to Him. As though the omnipotent God




had so few weapons in his armoury that we must tremble and faint at the loss of one! I have thought for years," he added," that God, in his dealings with us, aims particularly at our individual development and growth, with the ultimate object of fitting each one of us personally for the life to come; and when, in his infinite wisdom, he sees that the recast of our original natures is so filed, and rasped, and polished, as to be ready for the position he designs us to occupy, he graciously removes us thither."

Sickness, starvation, and security afflicted them at Rangoon. The monsoon brought disease. The Burmese lent brought them to starvation. The bigoted governors kept their house under constant observation for Christian activity. The Judsons returned back to Maulmain with family on September 5, 1847.

"Suffering and success go together. If you are succeeding without suffering, it is because others before you have suffered; if you are suffering without succeeding, it is that others after you may succeed."

By the end of 1849, he took ill. He tried a sea voyage to Amherst and a visit to Mergui but to no avail. The doctors prescribed him a longer sea voyage of 2 – 3 moths.

**Mr. Judson's Death**

He embarked on a French ship, "Aristide Marie." As he was very sick, Mr. Ranney, the superintendent of the press accompanied him. The weeping Burmese took him on board the ship. After four days and nights, the God of mercies took away his pain, Mr. Ranney having the hands of the saint in his, the ship officers around him, he breathed his last. Mr. Judson breathed his last on the $12^{th}$ April, 1850, and on the same day his body was buried in the sea.

Everlasting fruits of his work.

The man who had 'Christ in all theme' worked for 38 years in Burma. O! Wonder….. O! What wonders, God has already wrought! Mr. Judson would exclaim. Over 7000 Burmese had come to know the Lord and had been baptized, 63 congregations were established under the direction of 163 missionaries, native

pastors and assistants. On 19th Feb 1812, When Mr. Judson left, he was the first American missionary, 36 years later, seeing his example 1000 Americans had gone as a missionaries across the world. In 1892, The missionary Board which he and his friends helped establish was supporting missionary activities in all over the world having 444 churches, 41520 church members, 3298 missionaries, native pastors, teachers, and assistants.

- 15 % of Karen have come to Christ (George Dana Boardman started work among the Karen people).
- 90 % of Kachin have come to Christ. (Eugenia Kincaid began work among the Kachin people in northern Burma, Kachinland in 1837).
- 90 % of Chin have come to Christ. (Arthur and Laura Carson were pioneer missionaries to the Chin hill tribes in Burma, 1883).
- In 1966 all missionaries were expelled by the Burmese government, but the Burmese church has become a vibrant missionary-sending movement, despite financial limitations and geographic isolation. Baptists, Assemblies of God, Methodists and Anglicans form the strongest denominations in Burma. Many Christians are well-educated, but cannot rise to positions of responsibility.
- Over 2000 people have gone out as missionaries.
- There has been numerous churches and bible schools founded throughout the country.
- There are over 4 million Protestants in Myanmar today.

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